

HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

Property Address:	2012-14 Kalorama Road, NW	Agenda
Landmark/District:	Kalorama Triangle Historic District	X Consent Calendar
Meeting Date:	October 25, 2012	X Concept Review
H.P.A. Number:	12-625	New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Anne Brockett	X Alteration

Lock 7 Development, working with Ron Schneck of Square 134 Architects, seeks concept review to add to the rears of two adjoining townhouses in the Kalorama Triangle Historic District. This duplex was built in 1908 as speculative housing for the Iowa Apartment House Company as designed by Hill and Kendall. Each property consists of the main dwelling and a three-car garage on the rear alley.

Project Description

The owners seek to demolish the non-contributing three-car garages at both properties and erect rear additions to create 8 condo units at 2012 and 9 units at 2014. The properties would remain on separate lots and no interior connections are proposed. The addition at 2014 is slightly longer than its neighbor due to a larger lot size, but is otherwise designed to match. At each property, the changes would add a three-story ell to the rear of the house, extend the existing two-story side additions toward the rear, and connect this enlarged main block to a new block at the rear via a glassy connector. The form of the rear blocks would mimic the existing gambrel roof houses, but extend the full width of the property. Shed dormers would punctuate the front and rear roofs of the additions and Juliet balconies would project over the rear parking pads. Six new windows are proposed on each side of the existing houses.

Not inconsequentially, the 2014 half of the duplex has been significantly altered over time and the proposed project will restore the façade's historic character. The front door and porch were removed in a prior renovation; the berm was removed to allow access to a new side door at the basement level; and all windows were replaced. The project would replicate the intact porch of 2012 and reinstall a berm, returning the façade and landscaping to its historic appearance.

Evaluation

The HPO has carefully considered the proposal in light of the subject buildings, their immediate context, and the Board's review of similar projects. At 1109 M Street NW and 1215 N Street NW, for instance, the Board recommended approval of rear additions similar to the current proposal – a rear mass separated from the original building by a courtyard and glass hyphen. In both of these cases, and in others, it is the context surrounding the subject building that becomes important in determining compatibility.

In the case of the Kalorama Road properties, they are flanked by 5- and 8-story apartment buildings on the east and a massive 9-story apartment to the west. When viewed from the alley or from Wyoming Avenue across a parking lot, the additions will be set against the backdrop of the rear of these buildings. The additions will be minimally visible from the front where they project out to the sides, but as they are set back more than 90 feet from the sidewalk, they will not directly impact the historic character of the buildings or the Kalorama Road streetscape.

The project will offer a significant preservation benefit in the restoration of the façade and front yard of 2014, greatly enhancing the historic presence of the building on the street.

While the details of the proposal need refinement in terms of materials, window and door types, and railing design, the overall form, scale, and massing of the project are compatible with 2012-2014 Kalorama Road and with the surrounding historic district and consistent with previous Board approvals.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board find the concept to be compatible with the character of the historic district and consistent with the preservation act, and delegate final approval to staff.